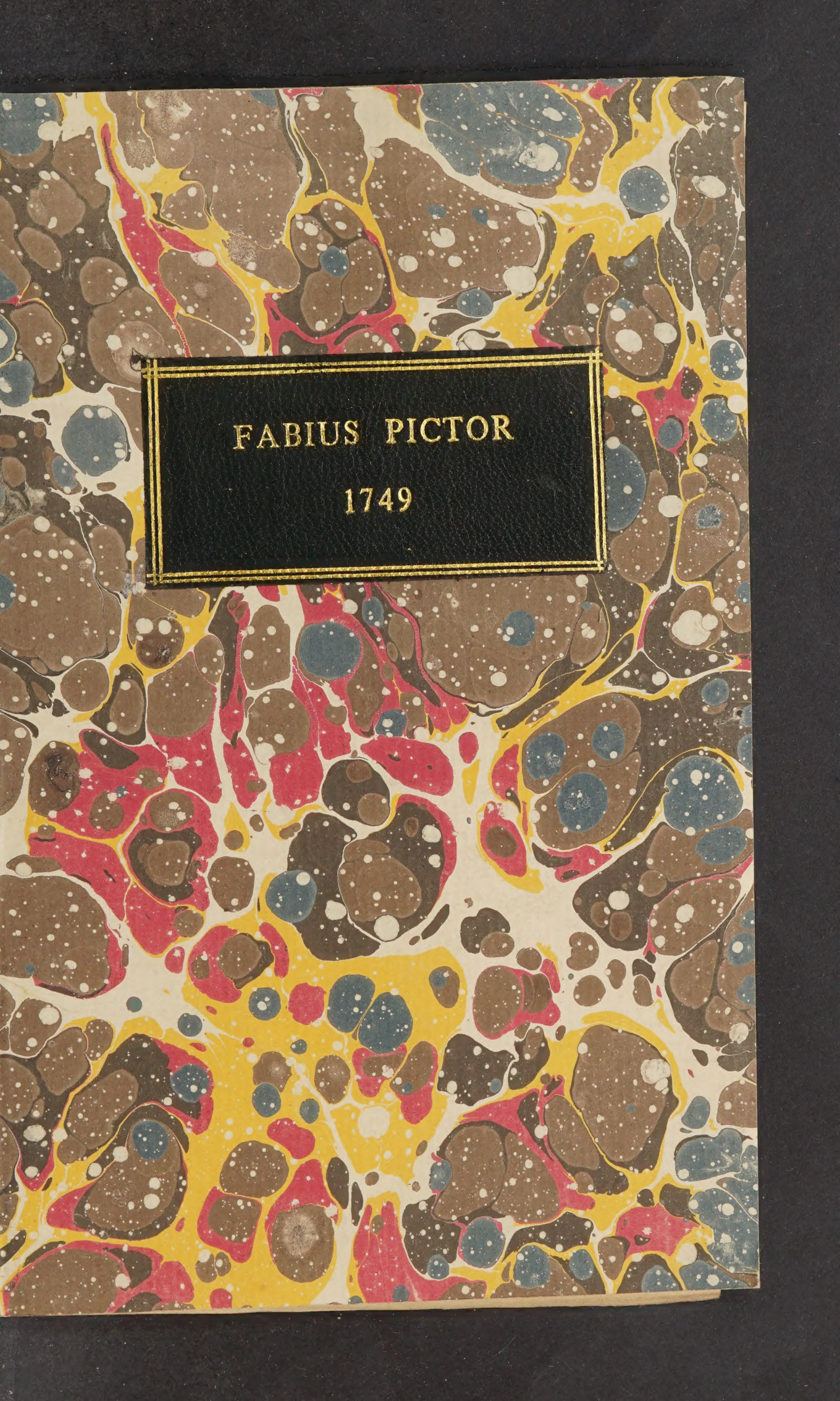
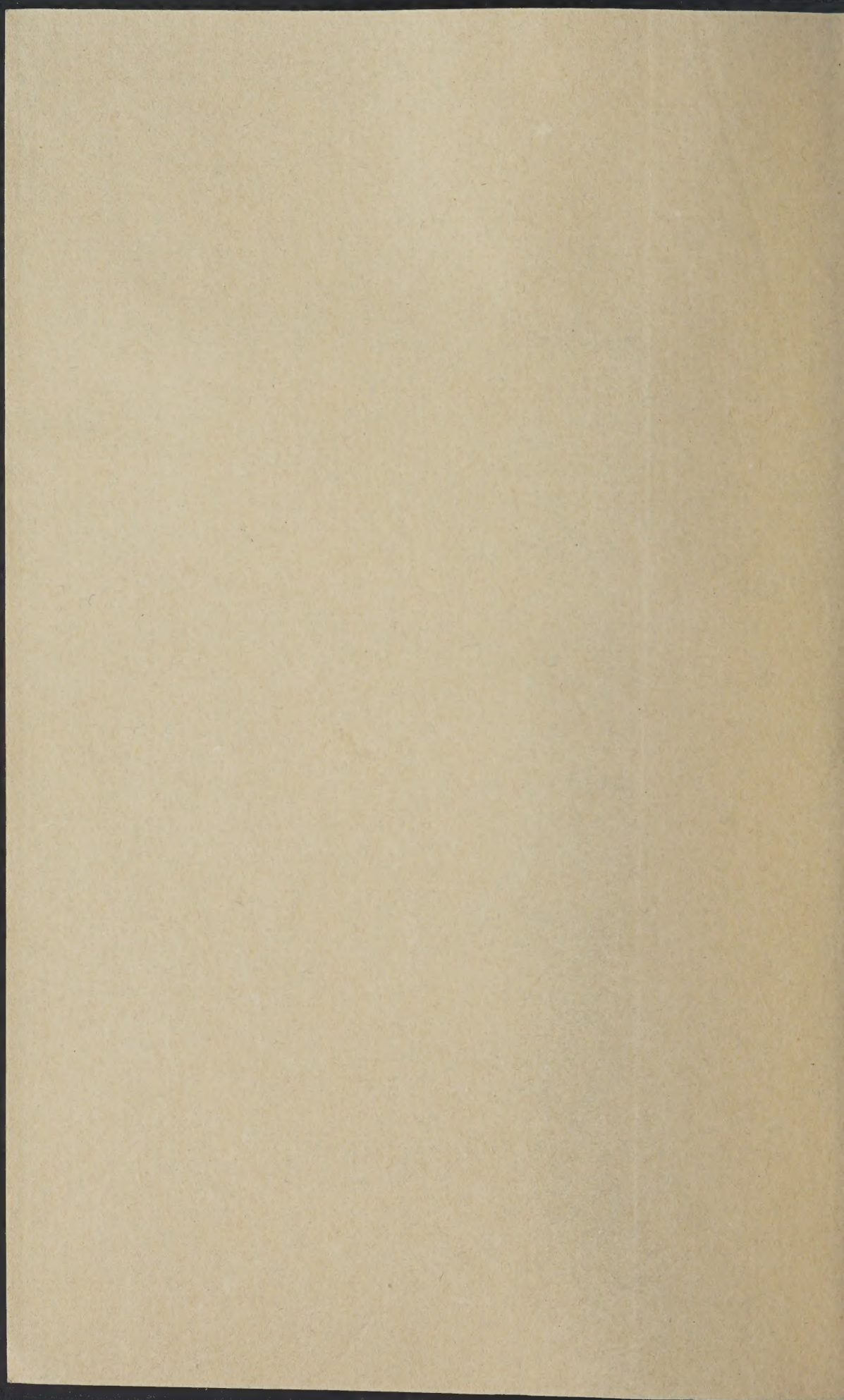
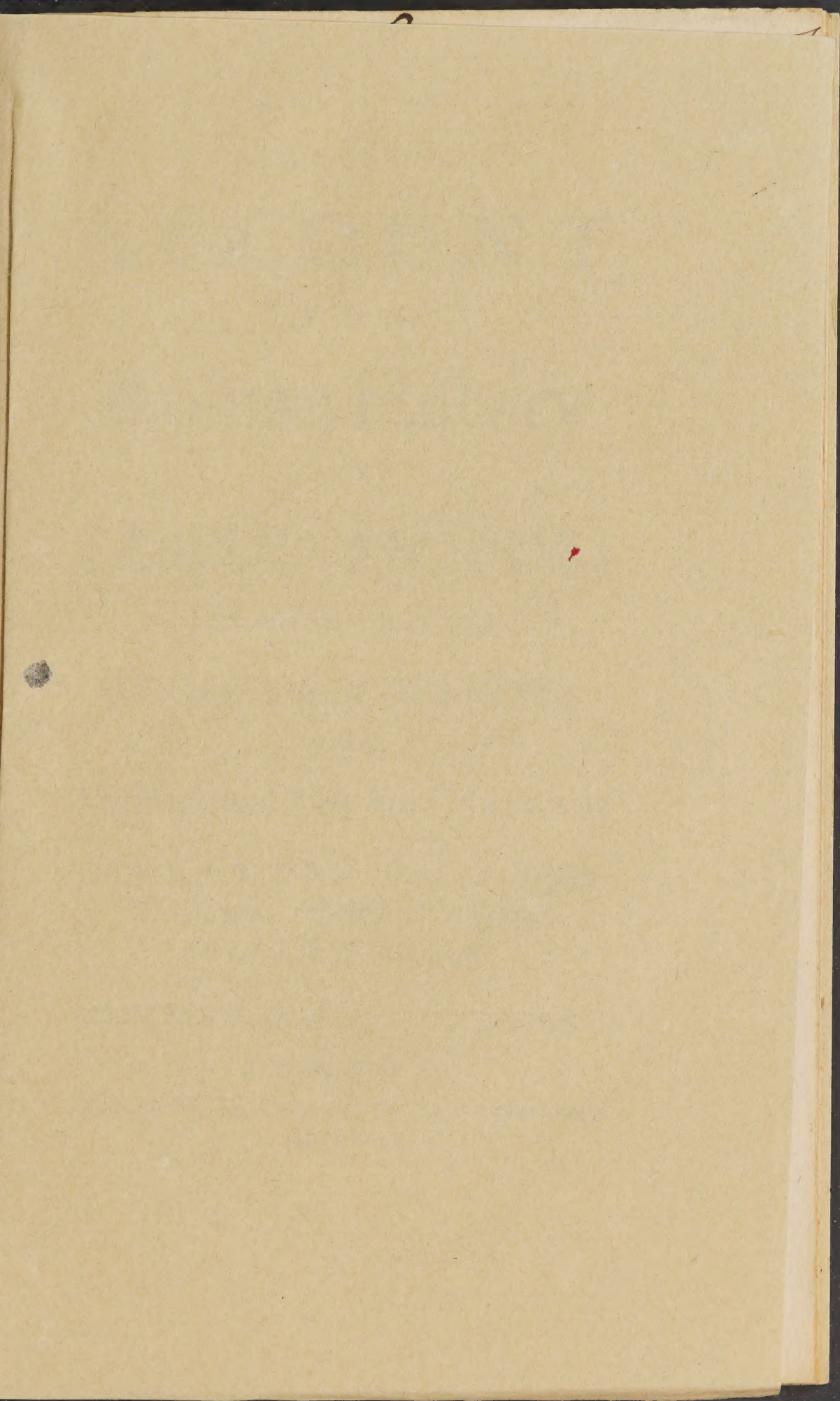


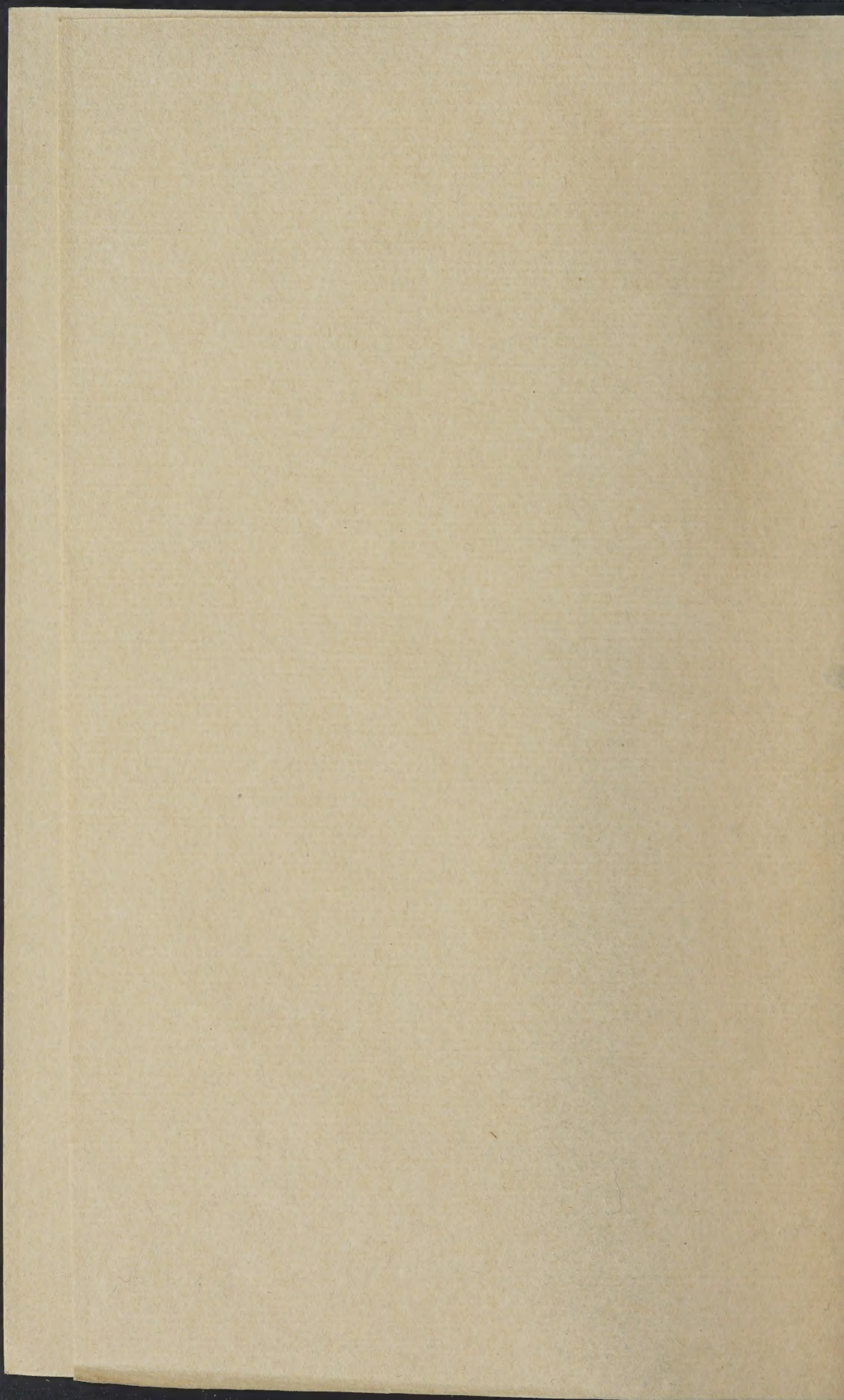
The image shows the front cover of a book. The background is a vibrant marbled paper with a pattern of brown, yellow, red, and blue spots and swirls. In the center, there is a black rectangular label with a thin gold border. The text on the label is in gold capital letters.

FABIUS PICTOR

1749







6

SOME
ACCOUNT
OF THE
Roman History
OF
FABIUS PICTOR;

From a MANUSCRIPT lately discover'd in

HERCULANEUM;
THE
Underground City near NAPLES;

In a LETTER from an *English*
Gentleman residing at *Naples*;
to his Friend at *London*.

LONDON,
Printed for M. COOPER, in *Pater-noster-Row*.
MDCCXLIX.

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ACCOUNT

OF THE
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MDCCLXXIX.

SOME
ACCOUNT
OF THE
ROMAN HISTORY
OF
FABIUS PICTOR, &c.

S I R, Naples, Nov. ¹⁷/₁₀, 1748.

WHEN I have given you an account, from time to time, of the discoveries that have been made in the city of Herculaneum, you have thanked me indeed, but you have al-
B ways

ways seemed dissatisfied at their not meeting with any one book, among all the various curiosities which have been found there. I have longed much to satisfy you; and have with you wondered much, that nothing of that kind should have appeared: for a city of people that never read, in so polite a part of the world too, as this was in Pliny's time (when the city, it seems, was overwhelmed) would be a very strange thing; and not a little disgraceful to the inhabitants. But the character of the Herculaneses is now likely to be cleared of that ignominy: for we have at length met with an evidence, that some of them probably did read; and that not only in their own language, but in such strange ones, as nobody now living can make any thing of.

Not

NOT to hold you any longer in suspense; it was but about ten days ago, that some of the workmen, in penetrating about forty yards to the east of the theater (which I described to you in a former letter) met with two fine marble pilasters of the Doric order, and a sort of marble door-case; which seemed to lead to a handsome apartment. They were ordered to carry on their searches, inward; and on clearing away the earth, found it was a very handsome room, wainscoted with marble of different colours. The side opposite to the entrance is adorned with four columns of the Ionic order; and an entablature over them, finely wrought, and perfectly well preserved. Between the columns, are squares of green marble, three feet wide, and six feet high; and each of these squares is adorned all

B 2

round,

round, with a border of different-coloured marbles, inlaid so as to make a sort of Mosaic work: much in the manner of an apartment in Augustus's palace at Rome; of which you must have seen the prints. Under each of these larger squares, is a less (of a foot and a half high, and three feet long) of the same green marble, what they call Verd Antique; ornamented all round with Mosaic work. As the workmen were clearing away the earth from the middlemost of these three lower squares, they found (by the sound of their instruments upon it) that it was hollow; and suspecting that there might be some treasure hid within, they repeated their blows with such violence, and so much impetuosity, that they broke it into twenty pieces (which they soon found, they need not have done; for it was made to move, in a groove, downwards.)

wards.) As soon as they had thus opened it, they discovered, by the light of their torches, that there was a cedar-box in it. This was locked too; but they burst it open: and were greatly disappointed at only finding some large scrolls of old paper, tied up in five bundles, in the inside of it. If it had contained money, there is little doubt but they would have secreted it, for their own use: but as it was only paper, they told what they had met with to the other workmen. This, soon after, brought one of the directors of the works to the place; who, when he saw it, began to suspect that it might be a greater treasure than they were aware of. Some priests of the neighbourhood were sent for: who found the contents of the casket to be five antient volumes, or books. Two of them, 'tis said, are in the Carthaginian language: and the other three are each inscribed

on the outside, in capital letters, with the following words:

CAII. FABII. PICTORIS. HISTORIA.
ROMANA.

All the inside is written in capitals too; on a sort of paper, made of the bark of trees.

As soon as the news of so considerable a discovery got to Naples; the king sent the famous Monsr. Baiardi, to Portice: with an order, to have the books delivered into his hands; for his Majesty's inspection. As I was informed that he returned to Naples with the books that evening; and was not to attend the king with them, till the following afternoon, I took the liberty of a long and intimate acquaintance with that gentleman: and made him a very early visit the next morning. I found him very happy, with his books before him. "Come, my dear friend (says he) and
I " share

“ share with me in one of the greatest
 “ pleasures I ever enjoyed in my life.
 “ I have been these three hours con-
 “ versing with Fabius Pictor. These
 “ are the three volumes of his history,
 “ which were found the other day at
 “ Herculaneum. The first volume con-
 “ tains the reigns of the seven kings;
 “ the second, concludes with the fall
 “ of the Decemvirate; and the third
 “ reaches to the destruction of Rome
 “ by the Gauls, and the restoration of
 “ it under Camillus. You see how
 “ fairly they are written; and how lit-
 “ tle the worse they are, for all the
 “ centuries they have lain there. He
 “ is an admirable writer! and gives us
 “ a thousand lights, that we before
 “ wanted. I wonder how he should
 “ write so well, in the age he lived!
 “ but he must have improved himself,
 “ from some Greek model; and pro-

“ bably, as has been said, from Diocles
 “ Peparethius. Those other two are
 “ probably (as they were said to be) in
 “ the Punic character: but I have no-
 “ thing to do with them; I only want
 “ to bring you acquainted with Fabius.
 “ I have just been reading here, in the
 “ beginning of his second volume, the
 “ account of a transaction which is
 “ wholly omitted by all the other histo-
 “ rians. Here sit down by me, and
 “ read it; that you may love Fabius, as
 “ well as I do.”

I THANKED him for his goodness to
 me; and took the second volume into
 my hands, with great pleasure; but soon
 found that it was not so easy a thing to
 read it, as I had imagined: for the
 strangeness of some of the words, and
 the odd spelling of others, and the en-
 tire want of stops, quite embarrassed me.

“ Come,

“ Come, says my good Friend smiling,
 “ give me my book again ; and I will
 “ read it to you ; since I see, you do not
 “ care to read it to me.” He did so ;
 and explained some of the words that
 were the most uncommon, as he went
 along ; with all that goodness, and
 complaisance, for which he is so re-
 markable. After reading the story,
 and drinking our chocolate, Monsieur
 Baiardi said, that he had some bu-
 siness which obliged him to go out,
 for an hour or two ; but that if I chose
 to stay, and read it over again ; or any
 other part of the history ; it was at my
 service. I returned him a great many
 thanks both for the trouble he had taken,
 and the liberty with which he indulged
 me : and after he was gone, sat down
 to translate the part he had read to me ;
 in order to send it to you, by the first
 post.

W H A T

WHAT we were reading, was an affair that happened in the very beginning of the consulate of Marcus Valerius and Posthumius Tubertus; while the Tarquins were yet living, in exile; and after they had in vain brought two wars into the bowels of their country; in hopes of recovering the throne, that they had forfeited by their tyrannies and indiscretion. The consul Valerius (says Fabius) summoned several of his friends to a private conference at his own house. There was his colleague, Tubertus; his brother, the famous Poplicola; and about twenty more of the most considerable persons of the senate, and the most known defenders of liberty and their country. When they were all met; Valerius addressed himself to them, in the following manner.

“ I HAVE

" I HAVE desired this meeting of
 " you, my friends, to consult you in an
 " affair, which very much concerns
 " every one here present ; and indeed
 " the whole senate, and the very being
 " of our state itself. I know there is
 " not any one of you but has been
 " much surprized to find, that, after we
 " have expelled the Tarquins and re-
 " covered our liberties, there should
 " yet be so many in the commonwealth,
 " that seem desirous of restoring the
 " Tyrant and his family ; and of rivet-
 " ting those fetters upon us again, from
 " which we freed ourselves by the as-
 " sistance of the immortal gods, and
 " the exertion of our own virtue. Such
 " a desire must be as astonishing, as it
 " is preposterous. But I have lately
 " discovered the cause of so amazing
 " a behaviour ; and can point out the
 " root

“ root of all this evil to you. I could
 “ wish that it had fallen on persons of a
 “ less respectable character : but one must
 “ forget characters, and persons, where
 “ the safety of the state is in question.
 “ Yes, Fathers, ’tis in some of the most
 “ sacred orders of men among us, that
 “ we must look for these unnatural
 “ criminals against their country and
 “ their religion. A considerable num-
 “ ber of the Flamens, and the greater
 “ part of the college of Augurs, are
 “ in this detestable catalogue. It is
 “ they, who have been the chief pre-
 “ fervers and fomenters of this in-
 “ fection among the people. I have
 “ certain informations lodged in my
 “ hands, from knowing and indisputa-
 “ ble witnesses, of some of their most
 “ secret conversations and cabals. ’Tis
 “ there, that they open all their ma-
 “ lice against the state; and lay their
 “ designs

“ designs how best to bring about the
 “ ruin of our liberties and our religion.
 “ ’Tis there that they set up images of
 “ the Tyrant, and his two sons; and
 “ erect altars, on which they make fre-
 “ quent libations; and offer up their
 “ joint devotions, for the health of that
 “ detested family, and the restoration of
 “ all our calamities. This is what I
 “ can fully prove: and it was on this
 “ account, that I desired this meeting;
 “ that we may consider together, what
 “ is most adviseable to be done, in so
 “ concerning a case.”

THIS speech of Valerius was at-
 tended by a general murmur, that run
 thorough the whole assembly. They
 were struck with the enormity of the
 crime; and yet more with the cha-
 racter of the chief criminals. Indi-
 gnation held them, for some time, from
 answer-

answering him: till at length Tubertus
arose; and spoke, as follows:

“ I AM more struck with horror at
“ the behaviour of these holy men, as
“ they call them, than doubtful of the
“ punishment that their crimes deserve;
“ nor am I so much surprized at their
“ iniquities in their private assemblies,
“ and cabals, as some here present seem
“ to be. Have they not constantly
“ been endeavouring to thwart us, in
“ all our labours for confirming the li-
“ berties, and happiness, of our coun-
“ try? Have they not, ever since we ex-
“ pelled the Tyrant (wherever they have
“ been concerned) given their own
“ voices for the favourers of the Tar-
“ quins; and influenced as many of
“ the people, as they could, to do the
“ same? Is it not well known; that, in
“ the college of the Augurs in particu-
“ lar,

“ lar, it is looked upon as disgraceful for
 “ any one to wish well to our establish-
 “ ment, and that the few, who dare to
 “ own it, are the objects of the general
 “ hatred, and of the persecuting spirit of
 “ their rulers? Do they not chuse, for
 “ their chiefs, in all cases where they
 “ have any posts of honour or trust to
 “ dispose of, such as are most suspected
 “ to be in the interest of the Tyrant? And
 “ make their highest offices circulate
 “ thorough such hands, as are supposed to
 “ be the most ready to plunge a dagger in
 “ the bosom of their country? And now
 “ we find, that, in their private assemblies,
 “ they go so far as almost to worship the
 “ pictures and images of the destroyers
 “ of our liberty; and offer up their de-
 “ votions for those, who are only waiting
 “ for an opportunity to enslave them.—
 “ Weak, impious men! is this your re-
 “ ligion? — How is it possible, that the
 “ Tar-

“ Tarquins should have thus far deceived
 “ you!—Was it their building the Capi-
 “ toline temple, with so much pride and
 “ magnificence, that has thus dazzled
 “ your eyes? or the various pomps and
 “ ceremonies, with which they have dis-
 “ guised the pure religion of Numa?
 “ or the encrease of power and revenues,
 “ that you expect under their admini-
 “ stration?—And are you then, that should
 “ know the will of the Gods, the most
 “ ignorant not only of their will, but
 “ even of the facts which pass among
 “ men? Know you not, that the Gods
 “ dwell not so much in temples, as in
 “ the heart; and that they delight not
 “ so much in sacrifices, as in the pursuit
 “ of virtue; and in that highest exertion
 “ of it, the defence of our liberties and
 “ our country? Know you not, what all
 “ the world beside knows, that the power
 “ and dignities, which you want, are
 “ long

“ long since destined for other hands
 “ than yours, after you have stained
 “ them with the blood of your fellow-
 “ citizens? There are priests enough in
 “ Etruria, almost enough at Tarquinii
 “ only, for all the dignities that you
 “ gape for: they are already named,
 “ and all laid out either for the fol-
 “ lowers or foreign friends of the exiles.
 “ Should you prevail in your most
 “ horrid wishes, and see Rome made
 “ captive by the enemy; after all the
 “ devastation of our country, and the
 “ burnings of our palaces; after the
 “ carnage of your countrymen, and the
 “ murders and rapes of our wives and
 “ daughters; what would be the lot of
 “ you who may survive, but the loss of
 “ your liberty, and the disappointment
 “ of all your hopes? But I forget my-
 “ self; and talk as if the wretches were
 “ already before me.—Pardon me, Fa-

C

“ thers!

“ thers!—What I intended to mention
 “ to you, was this: that whereas we
 “ have such dangerous enemies, even
 “ within our walls, it is my design
 “ (if not disapproved by you) to call
 “ the senate together to-morrow, in the
 “ temple of Liberty: there to set the ini-
 “ quity of these Flamens and Augurs
 “ in its true light; and to propose the
 “ appointing such a select number of
 “ Commissioners, to enquire into the
 “ faults of these delinquents; with full
 “ powers of depriving them of all their
 “ revenues, offices, and dignities; and
 “ of farther punishing them, accord-
 “ ing to the proportion of their several
 “ crimes, either with banishment, or
 “ death.”

It was evident by their words and
 gestures, that the greater part of the
 company were inclined to Tubertus's
 opinion ;

opinion ; when Poplicola, the brother
 of the consul Valerius, arose. “ I am
 “ delighted, Fathers, says he, to see
 “ the indignation that you express in
 “ your countenances : ’tis an honest
 “ anger ; for ’tis in the cause of liberty,
 “ and of our country : which though
 “ you all love so well, I hope I may
 “ say, no one here loves better than
 “ myself. But though I share with
 “ you, Tubertus, in your just in-
 “ dignation of the crime ; I cannot
 “ so easily join with you in your ad-
 “ vice. I shall not put you in mind,
 “ how much mercy is preferable to se-
 “ verity ; for there may be some crimes
 “ beyond the reach of compassion :
 “ the only reason why I should dissent
 “ from your opinion, is my know-
 “ ledge of the temper of the people ;
 “ of their great attachment to the Au-
 “ gurs, in particular ; and the danger-

"ous consequences that might attend
 "our punishing those criminals, so
 "much as they deserve, and in the
 "method you propose. Was not this
 "making out of temporary commis-
 "sions, and dispossessing persons of a
 "sacred character contrary to the usual
 "course of justice, one of the chief
 "crimes in Tarquin's own admini-
 "stration; that which first alienated
 "the minds of the people from him;
 "and helped, as much as any thing,
 "to precipitate him and his family
 "into the disgraces they now deserved-
 "ly suffer? And if we should act as
 "he did, may not the people be as
 "ready to join him against us, as they
 "were to join us against him? The
 "Flamens are in possession of the
 "minds of the most ignorant of the
 "people (which is always much the
 "greatest part of any people) and if
 "they,

“ they, and the sacred college, were to
 “ be punished so far as they deserve ;
 “ the vulgar (who always confound the
 “ professors of religion with religion
 “ itself) would think that we were de-
 “ stroying the latter, while we were
 “ only weeding it of persons that are
 “ a shame to all religion. We should
 “ soon hear them in a full cry again
 “ (as we have on some former occa-
 “ sions) that *the temple, the temple, is*
 “ *in danger !* But beside the vulgar, it
 “ might offend some other persons of
 “ more merit, and higher consideration.
 “ All the different classes of holy men
 “ among us (however they may dif-
 “ sent from one another in other things)
 “ look upon themselves as united to-
 “ gether, in one common tye and in-
 “ terest. Thus in exerting all the fe-
 “ verity of justice on such of the
 “ Flamens and Augurs as are against

“ us, we should not only wound all
 “ the rest of each of those orders who
 “ are for us ; but the Pontifices too,
 “ and the college of the Salii ; who
 “ are generally at present in the interest
 “ of us and of their country : we may
 “ therefore give up something of the
 “ demerits and punishment of the
 “ guilty, to the merits and concern
 “ of the innocent. Were we actu-
 “ ally alarmed with the enemy’s
 “ bringing in fire and sword into
 “ the bowels of our country, more
 “ violent methods might be ne-
 “ cessary : but we have twice re-
 “ pulsed their most violent attacks ;
 “ and they seem now to have quit-
 “ ted us, in a despondency of any
 “ return. The Latins are quite tired
 “ out ; and as they are a prudent
 “ people, I dare say, must think that
 “ they have suffered losses and dis-
 “ appoint-

“appointments enough, without em-
 “barking again on so dangerous a
 “bottom. Their Tarquins have ne-
 “ver brought any thing but ruin
 “and afflictions to them, King Por-
 “sena too has lately abandoned their
 “cause: and they are banished the
 “second time; from Hetruria now,
 “as they were before from our do-
 “mains. All have given them up,
 “except a few madmen here at home;
 “who have so far lost their senses,
 “as still to long to be in chains.
 “But this madness is gradually wear-
 “ing away too; even among the
 “holy inspirers of it themselves:
 “and a little more forbearance, and
 “good usage (which they begin al-
 “ready to be sensible of, in all their
 “lucid intervals) must in time re-
 “cover them out of their infatuation.
 “But, suppose they should not other-
 “ways

“ ways recover, the very object of
 “ their folly must cease and desert
 “ them in a short time. Tarquin,
 “ the father, is now old. His younger
 “ son Titus (they say) has lately made
 “ a solemn vow to heaven never to
 “ marry; and Sextus seems not at all
 “ inclined to change his state. So
 “ that they, who are mad only after
 “ the name of the Tarquins, may
 “ in a few years not have even that
 “ name to incite them to act against
 “ their country. Do not understand
 “ me, as if I would persuade you
 “ to be negligent of these deserted
 “ enemies of our state, within our
 “ own walls. Our two most vigi-
 “ lant consuls here present, and the
 “ rest of our honest and worthy ma-
 “ gistrates, will, I doubt not, have a
 “ constant eye over them, and all
 “ their motions. When they go
 “ so

“so far as to act against the laws
 “already in force, those laws will
 “punish them : but I would not
 “have you take any illegal steps,
 “and imitate Tarquin ; lest we
 “should fall, as the Tarquins did.”

THE history adds, that this speech
 of Poplicola had so much effect with
 his brother Valerius, and the rest of
 the company, that they prevailed on
 Tubertus to drop his design ; and
 that by the mildness and good ma-
 nagement of Poplicola afterwards,
 several of the Augurs were convinced
 of their folly, and quitted their bad
 practices against the state ; that many
 of the Flamens followed their exam-
 ple ; and that, in the compass of a
 very few years after, the race of the
 Tarquins became wholly extinct (as
 Poplicola had foretold) and conse-
 4 quently,

quently, all remains of the epidemical madness occasioned by that name, were totally dissipated. “ They
 “ who had continued the longest infected with it (says Fabius) then
 “ looked back on all their past designs, as persons recovered of a frenzy do on all the horrors and mischiefs they had planned in it; or as
 “ a man does, on his most dangerous and irrational chimæras, when
 “ just awakened out of a troubled dream.”

I WAS very glad that I had time to take down this account from Fabius, for you; and shall wait with impatience, till I have some farther news to send you: for they are going on every day; and who knows but that, in a little time, we may be masters of an entire Polybius, or Livy? Whatever happens,

happens, I shall be sure to communicate to you : and, in the mean time,

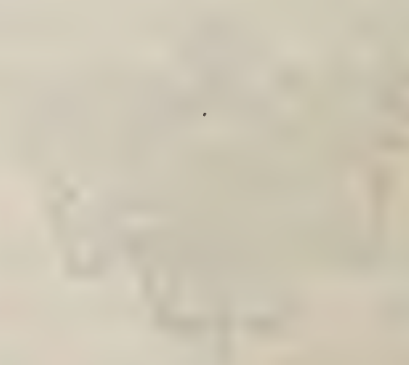
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